Female foeticide under IPC Section 302

†3754. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring female foeticide under Section 302 of Indian Penal Code as it is also equivalent to murder;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) There is no proposal under consideration to bring female foeticide under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code. Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994 provides for the prohibition of sex selection, before or after conception, and for regulation of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for the purpose of detecting genetic abnormalities etc. and for the prevention of their misuse for sex determination leading to female foeticide. The violations of the Act are punishable with imprisonment up to 5 years and fine up to Rs. 1.00 lakh apart from cancellation of registration and license of the medical practitioner.

Flouride in ground water

3755. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

SHRI DARA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 60 million Indians rely on ground water alone which is contaminated with flouride content exceeding WHO norms leading to bone deformities and other health hazards;

(b) whether it is also a fact that South Asian Regions (particularly in India) accounts for 34 per cent of diarrhoeal deaths and 64 per cent of Dengue deaths and around 400-500 millions are already at a risk of soil-transmitted worm infection; and

(c) if so, what remedial steps are Government propose to take in this regard?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Flouride in drinking water in excess of standards prescribed by Bureau of Indian Standards, *i.e.,* 1.0 mg per litre has been reported in 196 districts across 19 States of the country. However, as per WHO guidelines the safe level of flouride in drinking water is 1.5 mg. per litre. It is estimated that more than 60 million people are at risk.

(b) According to World Health Report 2004, 34% of diarrhoeal deaths occur in South East Region but it is difficult to confirm whether deaths are particularly contributed by India. As per World Health Report 2005 estimates, only 2.82% of the global dengue deaths have been reported from India. As for population at risk of soil transmitted worm infection/ helminthes, the extent of the problem in India is not well documented.

(c) Health is primarily a State subject and provision of medical relief for communicable diseases through primary and community health centres and supply of safe drinking water is looked after by the State Governments. Fluorosis is combated by provision of safe drinking water. Communicable diseases are linked to maintenance of environmental hygiene, sanitation, consumption of safe and good drinking water. The preventive measures taken by local health authorities include provision of safe drinking water, improvement of personal and community hygiene, safe disposal of human excreta, undertaking appropriate health education, surveillance and monitoring, distribution of chlorine tablets and ORS packets etc.

The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments/ Union Territories through various National Health Programmes. Funds are also provided under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme, Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programme, Total Sanitation Campaign, School Sanitation and Hygiene Education and low cost sanitation scheme for tackling quality related problems in respect of drinking water supply and sanitation. National Institute of Communicable Diseases provides technical support to the State Governments and undertakes surveillance, early detection and prevention and control of outbreaks of communicable diseases. The Government of India has launched an Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme in November, 2004 to further strengthen identification of outbreaks of various diseases including diarrohea, dengue etc. so that early intervention could be made and occurrence, disability and death due to such communicable diseases could be reduced.